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Family Influences on Intermarriage Attitudes: A Sibling Analysis in the Netherlands

*This study examined the influence of the family on native Dutch attitudes toward having ethnic minority members as kin through marriage using multiactor data from the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (*N = *1,652). Results from multilevel models showed that 28% of the variation in ethnic attitudes can be ascribed to the family. We investigated different pathways through which the family affects these attitudes; 60% of the family influence was explained. Results revealed that the intergenerational congruence of attitudes and the transmission of attitudes and structural and cultural positions are important mechanisms. Furthermore, family characteristics in adulthood—strength and warmth of family relationships—related to intermarriage attitudes, and the strength of family relationships moderated attitude congruence within families.*

In societies with ethnic cleavages, understanding the strength and origins of interethnic attitudes is of the utmost importance, as these attitudes may shape behavioral patterns toward members of other ethnic groups. For instance, ethnic attitudes have been demonstrated to influence voting behavior, interethnic (friendship) contacts, and interethnic romantic relationships (Bélanger & Aarts, 2006; Jaspers, Lubbers, & De Graaf, 2008; Levin, Taylor, & Caudle, 2007; Levin, Van Laar, & Sidanius, 2003). Researchers have proposed and tested many different explanations for ethnic attitudes. Studies have examined, for example, the influence of (a) personality correlates such as authoritarianism; (b) individual characteristics, like level of education, labor market position, and religiosity; and (c) intergroup phenomena such as intergroup contact and intergroup threat (Brown, 1995; Duckitt, 1992; Stephan & Stephan, 1996).

In recent years, increased attention has been paid to the role of social contexts, such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods (Johnson & Jacobson, 2005; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997; Taylor, 1998) in shaping interethnic attitudes. But surprisingly little research has been done on the social context of the family. Although researchers have long recognized the importance of family background in explaining ethnic or racial attitudes (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Allport, 1954), the field is characterized by a strong focus on family influences through direct socialization (Aboud & Doyle, 1996; Hughes et al., 2006; Sinclair, Dunn, & Lowery, 2005);

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relatively few studies have focused on alternative pathways of influence or addressed the role of the family during adulthood.

The aim of this article is to contribute to the understanding of the role played by the family in the formation and maintenance of ethnic attitudes. More specifically, we examine the influence of the family on the attitudes of native Dutch toward having ethnic minority members as kin through marriage. Studying attitudes toward interethnic marriage is of societal relevance because ethnic endogamy has traditionally been interpreted as the strongest marker of social distance between ethnic groups in society (Bogardus, 1967). Moreover, when outgroup members are accepted as kin, other types of positive interethnic relations are also more likely. This paper aims to contribute to the existing literature on ethnic attitudes in several ways.

First, little is known about the magnitude of the influence of the family on ethnic attitudes, because it is almost impossible to include every relevant aspect of the family. Therefore, the impact of family background is likely to be underestimated in conventional studies. A partial solution to this problem is provided by a sibling design (Hauser & Mossel, 1985). Because siblings generally share their parents and their childhood circumstances, the observed similarity in attitudes between siblings in later life can be viewed as a maximum estimate of the influence of the family of origin.

Second, we examine different ways through which the family of origin can influence ethnic attitudes. One such mechanism is the intergenerational transmission of attitudes (Moen, Erickson, & Dempster-McClain, 1997). However, empirical results on the strength of this relationship have been mixed (Fishbein, 2002). In addition, we also examine other ways in which the family of origin might influence adult children's attitudes. For instance, the family of origin could influence attitudes of children through the transmission of socioeconomic and cultural status (Vollebergh, Iedema, & Raaijmakers, 2001).

Third, little is known about family influences on attitudes during adulthood. Attitudes toward intermarriage may be related to characteristics of the relationships between family members during adulthood, such as the strength and warmth of family relationships. For instance, tightly knit families might foster interactions with persons who are culturally similar, because people with a different cultural background can be perceived as a threat to the cultural identity and solidarity of one's own group (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). On the other hand, warm family relations might increase tolerance and positive attitudes toward ethnic out-groups via increased well-being and higher generalized trust (Glanville & Paxton, 2007). Moreover, previous studies showed that family tightness and warmth facilitate the degree to which attitudes are successfully transmitted within families (Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988; White, 1996). Hence, it is possible that current family characteristics facilitate the transmission of attitudes within families toward intermarriage. In addition, most studies tend to focus on the way the family affects ethnic attitudes of adolescents, but do not address the issue of the extent to which family background still influences ethnic attitudes in adult life.

To test our hypotheses, we use data from the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (Dykstra et al., 2005). This survey has collected information on ethnic attitudes of multiple family members, allowing the use of multilevel models in which both individual and family effects can be estimated.

Assessing the Influence of the Family of Origin: Sibling Models

Social scientists have long recognized the influence of family background on ethnic attitudes (e.g., Allport, 1954). The term *ethnic attitudes* refers to attitudes toward people with another ethnic background. In the Netherlands, the official definition used by Statistics Netherlands is that someone is classified as an ethnic minority member ''if at least one of the parents was born abroad.'' Usually, the influence of the family of origin is assessed by estimating the congruence between ethnic attitudes of children and their parents. This approach, however, neglects other possible ways in which the family may influence the attitudes of children. In addition, some possible family effects, such as genetic inheritance (Eaves et al., 1999), are hard to measure at all. Therefore, most studies underestimate the impact of the family. An alternative way to estimate the influence of the family is to use information on siblings. Recently, sibling data have been used in studies on family influences on family attitudes (De Vries, Kalmijn,

& Liefbroer, 2009) and actual intermarriage patterns (Kalmijn, Liefbroer, Van Poppel, & Van Solinge, 2006). These studies showed that almost a third of the total variance in family attitudes and intermarriage patterns was due to family background.

Extending the sibling approach to the realm of ethnic attitudes, we study the impact of the family of origin on intermarriage attitudes based on the similarity in attitudes between siblings. Using a sibling design, one can estimate the part of the total variation in attitudes that is shared by siblings. This constitutes a maximum estimate of the total impact of family background. It includes all factors that make brothers and sisters resemble each other more than random individuals. One such factor is the sibling relation itself, because siblings can be important role models for each other (Brody & Murry, 2001; Whiteman, McHale, & Crouter, 2007). Sibling attitude congruence also results from siblings sharing experiences outside the family, for instance, in the neighborhood and at school. To some extent, such experiences can still be viewed as being family related, as it is the family that decides about living in a certain neighborhood or sending children to a specific school (Sieben, 2001).

Attitude Congruence Within Families

Socialization theory emphasizes the importance of direct transmission of ethnic attitudes within families (Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986; Moen et al., 1997). On the one hand, parents transmit their attitudes by teaching and informing their children about the content and functions of the attitudes. On the other hand, the transmission can be less deliberate when children learn their parents' attitudes through observation and the imitation of role models (Bandura, 1986). Previous studies have demonstrated that the transmission process is important, although results with respect to the strength and significance of attitudinal transmission between parents and children have been mixed (Aboud & Doyle, 1996; Fishbein, 2002; Hughes et al., 2006; Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004; Sinclair et al., 2005). In addition, research has shown that the transmission of attitudes is not a one-way process, but that children increasingly influence their parents as they grow older (Glass et al., 1986). Several longitudinal studies confirmed this bidirectional nature of attitude transmission, although they also showed that the transmission often is asymmetrical, with a larger impact of parents on their children than vice versa (Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004; Vollebergh et al., 2001).

In this study, we examined the relation between current rather than past parental ethnic attitudes and those of their adult children. This is a potential drawback, as parental attitudes might have changed since the formative period. Although longitudinal studies showed that ethnic attitudes are quite stable during adulthood, and that stability is stronger for parents than for their children (Van de Vijver, Breugelmans, & Schalk-Soekar, 2008; Vollebergh et al., 2001), caution is needed in interpreting the relation between parents' and children's ethnic attitudes. In sum, due to the cross-sectional design we are not able to assess the direction of attitude transmission, and therefore we speak about intergenerational attitude congruence (Bucx, Raaijmakers, & Van Wel, 2010) rather than about intergenerational attitude transmission. Thus, our first hypothesis was:

> Hypothesis 1: Based on intergenerational attitude congruence, parents' intermarriage attitudes covary with the intermarriage attitudes of their children.

Parents' Social and Cultural Positions

Parents not only affect their children through their own attitudes, but in other ways as well. First, people's attitudes and values might reflect the conditions that prevailed during their preadult years (Inglehart, 1990). Members of a family share a collective context that fosters or hampers negative ethnic attitudes. Children who are raised in a specific socioeconomic and cultural context are exposed to the accompanying views and ideas. In this study, several potentially important indicators of childhood contexts were examined. Highly educated parents often have relatively highly educated friends and family members; they constitute a context that may emphasize tolerance and positive ethnic attitudes. In addition, growing up in a high-status family with relatively comfortable living conditions may lead to low levels of perceived threat from ethnic minorities and thus to relatively favorable ethnic attitudes (Olzak, 1992).

Having religious parents may lead to relatively negative views toward intermarriage, as the religious community to which the children are exposed in their youth may emphasize norms of endogamy (Kalmijn, 1998). Finally, rural areas are relatively homogeneous, providing fewer opportunities to meet ethnic out-group members and offering fewer possibilities for subcultural activities than more urban areas. As a consequence, people from rural areas tend to hold less favorable attitudes toward ethnic out-group members than people who grew up in urban areas (Tuch, 1987). In sum, we hypothesized that:

> Hypothesis 2: Parental education, parental social status, parental religiosity, and parental urbanization influence intermarriage attitudes of adult children.

Attitude similarity within families may also result from the intergenerational transmission of structural and cultural positions (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Glass et al., 1986; Myers, 1996). Educational attainment, social status, religiosity, and degree of urbanization are all transmitted via the family (Blau & Duncan, 1967; Myers; Sharkey, 2008; Shavit & Blossfeld, 1993) and are known to affect ethnic attitudes (Duckitt, 1992; Schuman et al., 1997; Tuch, 1987; Vollebergh et al., 2001). If intergenerational transmission of social positions is an important mechanism, the effect of family background characteristics will be partially mediated by siblings' own social positions. Therefore, our third hypothesis was:

> Hypothesis 3: Part of the effect of parental background characteristics on intermarriage attitudes of adult children is mediated by the transmission of social and cultural positions.

Additional Explanations: Current Family Characteristics

Sibling similarity in intermarriage attitudes may also reflect shared family experiences during adulthood. Several family processes may be relevant. First, just as intermarriage can be perceived as a threat to the cultural identity and solidarity of one's own group (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007), it can also be perceived as a threat to the identity and solidarity of one's family. People often prefer to interact with others who share certain behaviors and worldviews, because cultural similarity enlarges the opportunities to participate in joint activities and enhance mutual understanding (Byrne, 1971; Kalmijn, 1998; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). As a result, mixed marriages may be perceived as a threat to the internal solidarity and homogeneity of the family. In addition, interethnic relations increase the risks of social sanctions by family members. Interethnic couples have to deal with more disapproval, receive less support, and in extreme situations might face exclusion and hostility (Hohmann-Marriott & Amato, 2008; Kalmijn, 1998). Furthermore, strong in-group ties are often accompanied by out-group hostility, particularly under conditions of threat to the in-group (Turner, 1999). Although these group dynamics are usually applied to large-scale groups, for example, ethnic or national groups, perceived cultural threat might also lead to more negative interethnic attitudes within smaller groups that are based on common bonds (Prentice, Miller, & Lightdale, 1994), of which the family is a primary example. Consistent with findings on experimental groups (Petersen, Dietz, & Frey, 2004), it is expected that a negative view on intermarriage is particularly likely among families characterized by multifold contacts and strong feelings of mutual obligation. In sum, families with strong ties may increase group boundaries and facilitate exclusion of individuals who are not considered to be part of one's own cultural group. Hence, we hypothesized that:

> Hypothesis 4: Strong family ties increase the resistance to intermarriage; therefore the strength of family ties influences intermarriage attitudes of adult children.

Family warmth is another family characteristic that may influence attitudes toward intermarriage (Huijnk, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2010). Family warmth refers to the feelings and evaluation of family members about their relationships with other members, as well as the exchange of emotional support. In warm relations, people develop trust in others. Glanville and Paxton (2007) showed that trust developed within the family can evolve into a more generalized sense of trust. Furthermore, the positive effect of warm family relationships on generalized trust is not restricted to the pre-adult years (Glanville & Paxton). Generalized trust implies a trust that reaches beyond the circle of acquaintances and

the boundaries of one's social group (Uslaner, 2002). In addition, research has found that warm and emotionally supportive social ties are related to empathy, perspective, and less anxiety and insecurity (Stephan & Finlay, 1999; Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith, & Huo, 1997). These individual psychological outcomes are associated with openness and tolerance. Empathy and perspective, for example, have been found to be related to more positive attitudes toward ethnic minorities (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Stephan & Finlay). Furthermore, fewer feelings of anxiety and insecurity foster a more positive orientation toward the larger society and toward ethnic minorities in particular (e.g., Hogg, 2000; Tyler et al., 1997). Hence, we expected:

> Hypothesis 5: Family warmth decreases the resistance to intermarriage; therefore the warmth of family relationships influences intermarriage attitudes of adult children.

Moderating Effects of Family Characteristics

The transmission of attitudes is known to be selective; an extensive list of moderators has been examined. In addition to individual characteristics, such as gender and age (Bandura, 1986; Jaspers, Lubbers, & De Vries, 2008; Rohan & Zanna, 1996), the strength and warmth of family relationships have been identified as transmission facilitators (Jaspers, Lubbers, & De Vries, 2008; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988; White, 1996). Hence, family warmth and the strength of family relationships may not only relate directly to intermarriage attitudes, but also act as moderators of the transmission of intermarriage attitudes. This is best illustrated through Grusec and Goodnow's (1994) two-step model of internalization, developed to understand conditions of attitudinal similarity between family members. The first step is the child's perception of the parent's message, a perception that may be accurate or inaccurate. The second step is the acceptance or rejection of the perceived message. Failure to internalize may result either from inaccurate perception or from rejection. Acceptance or rejection is expected to depend on the warmth of the relationship between parent and child (Grusec & Goodnow). Parental warmth is related to the extent to which children are motivated to accept the parental message and makes children more eager to be similar to the agents of socialization. Moreover, a lack of (perceived) emotional warmth may cause children to react against their parents' attitudes throughout adult life (Jaspers, Lubbers, & De Vries, 2008). Hence, it is likely that the transmission of attitudes will be more effective in loving circumstances.

Furthermore, the strength of family ties might also relate to both steps in the process of internalization. In families with a strong in-group orientation, family members are more responsive to their fellow family members' beliefs and attitudes. Research also showed that interdependence promotes the transmission of cultural values from parents to children (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001).

In our study, we examine whether the strength and warmth of family relationships in children's adult lives also moderate the transmission of attitudes. We have two arguments for expecting such a moderating effect. First, as children age, most of them leave their parents' home and they are influenced by other institutions and contexts, such as partners and colleagues (Glass et al., 1986), which might result in weaker attitude congruence between parents and children during adult life. Nevertheless, the warmth and strength of family relationships in adult life may buffer the degree to which these initial socialization influences fade away. Second, current family characteristics may be an indicator of the family situation in the formative period. Whereas friends who have once been close may drift apart, bonds with kin tend to be more persistent, and the emotional quality of the parent – child relationship shows a great deal of stability over time (Aquilino, 1997). Hence, we hypothesized:

> Hypothesis 6: The effect of parents' intermarriage attitudes on their adult children's attitudes positively varies with the warmth and strength of family relationships.

METHOD

Sample

The data are from the Netherlands Kinship Panel Study (NKPS), a large-scale survey on the nature and strength of family relationships in the Netherlands (Dykstra et al., 2005, 2007). Data collection for the first wave took place between 2002 and 2004. In total, 8,161 individuals between 18 and 80 years of age

were interviewed. The overall response rate was 45%, which is about average for family surveys in the Netherlands (Dykstra et al., 2005). In 2007 the second wave was conducted, with a response rate of 74%, and a realized sample of 6,026 interviews (Dykstra et al., 2007). Approximately 15% of the Wave 1 respondents refused to participate in the second wave, whereas 11% of the first wave respondents were not reached, too ill, or deceased, or had left the Netherlands. After the interview, respondents received a supplementary self-completion questionnaire; 95% of them returned it. During the interview, the primary respondents were asked for permission to send a written questionnaire to several randomly selected family members (''alters''): two children at least 15 years of age, a sibling, a parent, and a partner (if available). The response rates to the written questionnaire were 31%, 34%, and 29% for parents, children, and siblings, respectively. A substantial proportion of the nonresponse was due primary respondents' refusal to contact a family member. When we take this into account, the response rates were 45%, 42%, and 41% for parents, children, and siblings, respectively (see the section on Analytic Strategy for how we dealt with the high nonresponse of family members).

In the current study, we mainly used data from the second wave of the NKPS. The first wave of the NKPS was used only to obtain information on the time-invariant parental background characteristics when the respondent was age 15. No information on intermarriage attitudes of alters was available in the first wave.

We considered only native Dutch participants with native Dutch parents. The research design required information on a triad consisting of a sibling pair and a parent. We designated as a type A triad the configuration of a primary respondent, a sibling, and a parent ($n = 880$). Type B triads consisted of a primary respondent and two of her or his children ($n = 772$). The variables were measured in the same way for both types of triads, except for some small differences to be explained later. We included both types of triads simultaneously in the analysis, but performed tests for possible differences between the two types of triads to gauge the effect of the independent variables on the intermarriage attitude. For 17 families, information on both types of triads was available. In these families, we randomly selected one of the two triads to maintain a two-level structure. The final sample consisted of 1,652 participants (826 sibling pairs connected to one parent).

Measures

In the United States, many studies on intermarriage have focused on race (Qian, 1997; Rosenfeld, 2008). In the Netherlands, intermarriage is more strongly determined by ethnic than by racial distinctions (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006). Hence, we focused on the attitudes toward interethnic marriages. Since the 1960s, a diverse group of immigrants has moved to the Netherlands due to the colonial history in the Caribbean area (e.g., Surinam), the recruitment of labor immigrants from Mediterranean countries (e.g., Turkey and Morocco), and, more recently, the influx of asylum seekers from a wide variety of countries. Currently, 11% of the 16.6 million inhabitants of the Netherlands originate from non-Western countries, with the majority coming from Surinam, Turkey, and Morocco (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau (SCP), 2009). The Surinamese – Dutch are culturally and religiously more similar to the native Dutch and have better socioeconomic positions than Turkish – Dutch and Moroccan – Dutch immigrants (SCP, 2009).

Intermarriage attitudes were measured by three items. Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they would disapprove if their (actual or imagined) child decided to marry someone with a (a) Surinamese, (b) Turkish, or (c) Moroccan background. The response categories for the three items were 1 = *would bother me a lot*, 2 = *would bother me a little*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *would not bother me*, and 5 = *would not bother me at all*. The items correlated extremely highly across out-groups ($\alpha \geq .95$ for all types of family members). Therefore, the three items were combined into one scale by calculating the mean value. Higher scores reflected more resistance to ethnic intermarriage, as items were reverse-scored.

Family background characteristics. Parental education was based on the highest educational attainment of either one of the parents, coded from 0 = *did not complete elementary school* to 10 = *post graduate*. Parental social status was based on the mean score of the parents on the International Socioeconomic Index (ISEI). Higher scores represented higher socioeconomic status. Following De Vries et al. (2009), parental

religiosity was measured by a dichotomous variable indicating whether both parents were church members (1 = *yes*; 0 = *otherwise*). Parental urbanization referred to the population density of the municipality of the family of origin. Higher scores indicated higher levels of urbanization.

One should note that for triad type A, family background characteristics reflected the situation when the primary respondent was 15 years old. For triad type B, family background characteristics were based on the current situation of the parents. Although we would have preferred information on parental characteristics during the children's formative period for both samples, we think that this is not a large problem. The current parental measures are likely to be fairly close to the measures when the respondent was 15, because family educational level, religiosity, and social status have typically crystallized by the time the children are age 15. In addition, Mulder and Hooimeijer (1999) showed that there is little urban – rural migration of parents in the Netherlands after children have reached adulthood. Although the social status (ISEI score) of the parents might alter after a child reaches age 15, it probably was strongly correlated to the situation at age 15, and therefore served as a reasonable indicator for the earlier situation. In our analyses we tested whether the effects of the independent variables differed between the two types of triads.

Current family characteristics. Feelings of affection and the exchange of emotional support are specific indicators of family warmth, whereas the strength of family relationships is indicated by frequency of family contact and adherence to norms of family obligations. Family contact was measured by asking respondents about their face-to-face contacts with their parent in the past 12 months. The response categories ranged from 1 = *never* to 7 = *daily*. If family members lived in the same household, daily contact was assumed. For each sibling, family contact was calculated as the mean score of contact with the parent and with the other sibling.

Family norms were measured using four items. Sample items were ''Family members should be ready to support each other, even if they do not like each other'' and ''If one is in trouble, family should be there to provide support.'' Items were measured on 5-point scales that ranged from 1 = *strongly agree* to 5 = *strongly disagree*. These items were combined in one scale by taking the mean value ($\alpha = .85$). Higher scores represented a stronger endorsement of norms of family obligation.

Family emotional support was measured by the exchange of emotional support between respondent and parent during the last 3 months. Response categories were (a) *not at all*, (b) *once or twice*, and (c) *several times*.

Family affection was assessed by eight items reflecting feelings of warmth and perceived support from the family. Sample items are ''I place confidence in my family'';''I come from a special and precious family'';''At times, I have thought: I wish I had been born in another family''; and ''Should I need help, I can always turn to my family.'' The response categories ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. After reverse coding, we created a scale of family affection by computing an average score ($\alpha = .86$). A higher score on this variable corresponds to higher family affection.

Individual and control variables. Religiosity was based on church attendance of the respondent with scores ranging from 0 = *never* to 3 = *a few times a week or more*. Educational attainment of the respondent was coded from 0 = *did not complete elementary school* to 10 = *post-graduate*. The educational level was adjusted when a respondent was still studying. For these respondents, the mean of their obtained level of education and their current level of education was computed. Social status was based on the ISEI score of the respondent's occupation in the first wave. Due to nonemployment (e.g., student, pensioner, unemployed, homemaker, disabled), 32% of the respondents had no score on this variable. They were assigned a mean ISEI score and a dummy variable, *not employed*, was added to the analyses (see Sensitivity Analyses, below, for results).

Urbanization referred to the degree of urbanization of the municipality, with response categories ranging from 1 = *not urbanized* to 5 = *very strongly urbanized*. Gender (1 = *woman*; 0 = *man*) and *age* (years) were measured directly. Respondents with children were compared to those without children. The number of missing cases on the variables was limited. The percentage of missing cases on all variables was below 3% with the exception of religiosity of the parents (7.6%). To deal with the missing cases, imputation of missing values

Table 1. *Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges for Study Variables (*N = *1,652)*

	M	*SD*	Range
Intermarriage attitudes	2.93	1.06	1 – 5
Intermarriage with Moroccan	3.06	1.15	1 – 5
Intermarriage with Turk	2.91	1.10	1 – 5
Intermarriage with Surinamese	2.82	1.07	1 – 5
Family background characteristics			
Parental education	6.17	2.31	1 – 10
Parental religiosity (1 = *both*)	0.75	0.43	0 – 1
Parental SES	50.54	14.77	10 – 88
Urbanization at age 15	2.90	1.22	1 – 5
Parental intermarriage attitude	3.35	0.94	1 – 5
Intermarriage with Moroccan	3.48	0.97	1 – 5
Intermarriage with Turk	3.36	1.00	1 – 5
Intermarriage with Surinamese	3.23	1.00	1 – 5
Individual characteristics			
Education	7.20	1.74	1 – 10
Religiosity (church attendance)	0.49	0.85	0 – 3
Social status	51.72	15.59	10 – 88
Urbanization	3.25	1.29	1 – 5
Age	35.76	9.29	17 – 67
Gender (1 = *woman*)	0.60	0.49	0 – 1
Children (1 = *yes*)	0.57	0.49	0 – 1
Current family characteristics			
Family support	2.79	0.38	1 – 3
Family affection	4.21	0.67	1 – 5
Family contact	4.71	1.16	1 – 7
Family norms	3.61	0.71	1 – 5

by chained equations was performed using Stata's ICE routine (Royston, 2005). Descriptive information on the independent variables is presented in Table 1.

Analytic Strategy

Two approaches are available to examine family influences via sibling data. One approach uses structural equation modeling (De Vries et al., 2009). The other approach uses multilevel modeling (Kalmijn et al., 2006). Because we were interested in the way individual factors related to individual intermarriage attitudes and the extent to which these factors explained the family influence, we opted for multilevel sibling models (De Vries et al., 2009; Hauser & Mossel, 1985). Hence, the intermarriage attitudes of the siblings constituted our dependent variable. In multilevel sibling models, differences in these attitudes between families and between individuals within families are estimated simultaneously (Goldstein, 1995). The total variance in the attitude scores was divided into within-family and between-family variances. The between-family variance was an estimate of how much of the variation can be attributed to the family of origin. The within-family variance indicated the factors unique to the adult children. A multilevel sibling model allows for a correct estimation of the effects of the measured family variables and enables assessment of the extent to which variation among families is explained by these measured characteristics.

One problem with our use of multiactor data was the high level of nonresponse of family members. As a result, data were available for a subset of all eligible family triads only. This could result in biased estimates. For instance, studies have shown that close and qualitatively good family relationships are often overrepresented in multiactor designs (Kalmijn & Liefbroer, 2011). We used Heckman's (1979) sample selection model to correct for this possible bias. First, we constructed the set of all possible triads and determined whether these triads actually participated or not. Next, we estimated which factors influenced the propensity of a triad to participate in the study. Independent variables included social and demographic characteristics of the triad members (gender and cohabitation status of the triad members, education and age of the primary respondent), characteristics of the relation between triad members (frequency of face-to-face contact, quality of the relationship, exchange of support, gender composition, and the occurrence of conflicts between family members), and the atmosphere of the interview with the primary respondent. This information was obtained directly from the primary respondent. Based on the results of this probit model (available upon request from the first author), we calculated a score that indicated a triad's propensity to respond (Mill's lambda; Heckman, 1979). Second, we added Mill's lambda to our multilevel sibling models. The effect of Mill's lambda indicates whether the intermarriage attitude is related to the nonresponse pattern of the triad and automatically corrects the effects of the other independent variables. Lambda is an inverse transformation of the probability of a triad's participation. Hence, a positive effect implies that those who were less likely to respond had higher resistance to intermarriage.

We conducted a multilevel analysis of multiple imputed data using Stata's ICE and xtmixed routines. In the first step of the analysis the proportion of the total variance due to the family was estimated. Next, a series of regression models was estimated. The first model included only family background variables in order to examine the relation between parental social background and (adult) children's attitudes. In the second model, the parental intermarriage attitude was included in order to examine the contribution of the congruence mechanism to the explanation of the family variance. In the third model, individual control variables were included in order to examine the degree to which the effects of family background are mediated by current individual factors. Further, we focused on the possible direct (Model 4) and moderating (Model 5) effects of the strength and warmth of family relationships. In the fifth model, the moderating variables were centered around the mean. Finally, we conducted a number of additional analyses to examine the robustness of the findings. In particular, we examined whether family congruence is stronger for same-gender siblings than for siblings of opposite genders and whether congruence differed between triads consisting of the primary respondent, his or her sibling, and his or her parent (type A) and triads consisting of the primary respondent and his or her children (type B).

Results

We first estimated a variance components model to calculate the proportion of the total variance that can be attributed to family-related factors. The proportion of the total variance due to the family was calculated by dividing the between-family variance (.314) by the total variance, which consists of the within-family variance (.818) and the between-family variance (.314). This proportion was .28, which implies that 28% of the total variance in intermarriage attitudes was due to differences between families. Hence, the results show that, in line with our expectations, the family of origin accounts for a substantial part of differences in attitudes toward ethnic intermarriage.

The results of the multilevel regression models are presented in Table 2. Model 1 displays findings for the family background variables. Together, these family background variables accounted for 10% of the family variance, as

Table 2. *Multilevel Sibling Models: Intermarriage Attitudes* (N = *1,652)*

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	*SE* B	β	B	*SE* B	β	B	*SE* B	β
Intercept	3.43			3.24			3.81		
Family background									
Parental education	−0.05**	0.02	.10	−0.03*	0.01	.06	−0.01	0.01	.03
Parental religiosity	0.11	0.08	.04	0.05	0.07	.02	0.03	0.07	.01
Parental SES	−0.01*	0.00	.07	−0.01	0.00	.06	−0.00	0.00	.03
Urbanization at age 15	−0.02	0.02	.02	−0.01	0.02	.01	0.04	0.02	.04
Parental attitude				0.33***	0.03	.30	0.31***	0.03	.28
Individual characteristics									
Education							−0.06***	0.02	.10
Religiosity							0.10**	0.03	.08
Social status							0.00	0.00	.00
Urbanization							−0.09***	0.02	.10
Age							−0.01*	0.00	.08
Gender (1 = *woman*)							−0.08	0.05	.04
Children (1 = *yes*)							0.21***	0.06	.10
Lambda	0.19*	0.09	.06	0.18*	0.08	.06	0.15	0.09	.05
Residual variance	.82			.82			.81		
Family variance	.28			.19			.15		
Explained family variance	.10			.39			.52		

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$, two-tailed.

the between-family variance (.31) decreased to .28. Children of parents with higher education and higher social status reported less resistance to intermarriage. Parental church membership did not have the expected positive effect. Children of religious parents were not more inclined to oppose intermarriage than those of nonreligious parents. The degree of urbanization of the parents had no effect. The positive effect of Mill's lambda indicated that those triads that did not respond had higher resistance to intermarriage. However, nonresponse did not seem to bias the relevant estimates in the model, as these remain virtually unchanged after inclusion of Mill's lambda.

In the second model, the intermarriage attitude of the parent was included in the analysis. Doing so explained an additional 29% of the family influence. As predicted by Hypothesis 1, we found a significant positive association between parents' and adult children's intermarriage attitudes. Parental socioeconomic status became nonsignificant, whereas parental educational attainment remained significant. This finding revealed that the effect of parental socioeconomic status was indirect: it was due to the transmission of attitudes. An additional test with Stata's KHB routine indicated significant mediation of the parental intermarriage attitude ($p = .04$).

In Model 3, individual characteristics were included. Parental intermarriage attitude remained significant, but parental education did not. Children's own educational attainment significantly mediated the relation between parental education and the intermarriage attitude ($p = .02$). This suggests that the original association between parental education and ethnic attitudes of their children operates via the intergenerational transmission of education. Thus, we did not find evidence that the socioeconomic context in which children were raised had a direct influence, contrary to Hypothesis 2. The explained family variance increased to 52%. Children's educational attainment had a negative effect on the opposition to interethnic marriage. More highly educated children had less negative views toward ethnic intermarriage than those with less education. Religiosity also was significant. People who attended church more often showed higher levels of resistance to interethnic marriage. In addition, degree of urbanization had a positive effect on intermarriage attitudes. People living in urban areas were less inclined to oppose interethnic marriages than people living in rural areas. Less resistance to intermarriage was found among older people and people without children than among younger people and people with children. Individual social status and gender were not associated with the intermarriage attitude. After the inclusion of the individual variables, Mill's lambdas were no longer significantly associated with the intermarriage attitude, suggesting the minimization of selection effects.

The fourth model (Table 3) included family contact, family norms, family support, and family affection as current family characteristics. In this model, the proportion of the explained family variance increased to 55%. All four current family characteristics were associated with intermarriage attitudes. Both family contact and the adherence to family norms increased the resistance to intermarriage. Hence, the results confirmed Hypothesis 4 regarding the positive effect of a strong family orientation on the opposition to ethnic intermarriage. Both measures of family warmth were associated with less resistance to ethnic intermarriage. The exchange of emotional support within families was related to a more accepting attitude toward ethnic outsiders in the family, as was family affection. Persons who perceived their families as warm and supporting reported less negative attitudes toward ethnic intermarriage, consistent with Hypothesis 5.

The final model tested whether the association between children's and parental intermarriage attitude depended on the strength and warmth of family relationships. The congruence between parents' and adult children's intermarriage attitudes was stronger in families with more frequent contact than in those with less contact. There was no evidence of a moderating role of family affection, family emotional support, or family norms.

Sensitivity Analyses

We tested whether there was a direct effect of type of triad (type A: primary respondent – sibling – parent versus type B: child 1 – child 2 – primary respondent), and whether the effects of the independent variables differed between the two types of triads. Interaction analyses revealed no significant differences between the two subsets for any of the effects. In addition, no direct effect was found

Table 3. *Current Family Characteristics and Intermarriage Attitudes* (N = *1,652)*

	Model 4			Model 5		
	B	*SE* B	*β*	B	*SE* B	*β*
Intercept	3.56			3.50		
Family background						
Parental education	−0.02	0.01	.03	−0.01	0.01	.03
Parental religiosity	0.02	0.07	.01	0.04	0.07	.02
Parental SES	−0.00	0.00	.02	−0.00	0.00	.02
Urbanization at age 15	0.03	0.02	.04	0.03	0.02	.04
Parental attitude	0.30***	0.03	.27	0.30***	0.03	.27
Individual characteristics						
Education	−0.05**	0.02	.08	−0.05**	0.02	.08
Religiosity	0.09**	0.03	.08	0.09**	0.03	.07
Social status	0.00	0.00	.01	0.00	0.00	.01
Urbanization	−0.07**	0.02	.08	−0.07**	0.02	.09
Age	−0.00	0.00	.05	−0.00	0.00	.03
Gender (1 = *woman*)	−0.08	0.05	.03	−0.06	0.05	.06
Children (1 = *yes*)	0.20***	0.06	.10	0.21***	0.06	.10
Current family characteristics						
Family contact	0.08***	0.02	.09	0.08***	0.02	.08
Family norms	0.09*	0.04	.06	0.09**	0.04	.06
Family support	−0.27***	0.07	.10	−0.28*	0.07	.10
Family affection	−0.10*	0.04	.06	−0.09***	0.04	.06
Interaction terms						
Family support × attitude parent				0.07	0.07	.03
Family affection × attitude parent				−0.05	0.04	.03
Family contact × attitude parent				0.05*	0.02	.05
Family norms × attitude parent				0.04	0.04	.03
Lambda	0.10	0.09	.03	0.10	0.09	.03
Residual variance	.80			.80		
Family variance	.14			.13		
Explained family variance	.55			.58		

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$, two-tailed.

for type of triad, and none of the other predictors changed after entering this variable into the model. Hence, it was appropriate to analyze both sets of triads in one aggregate sample.

Next, we examined the gender composition of the triads. The family variance was slightly higher for same-gender parent–child dyads (.32) than for different-gender parent–child dyads (.28). In addition, same-gender sibling dyads showed a somewhat higher family factor (.30) than different-gender sibling dyads (.25). However, the gender composition of the parent–child dyad did not show a direct relation with the intermarriage attitude, nor did it condition the association between the attitudes of the parent and the child. Thus, the results were not affected by the gender composition of the triads. The age composition of triads was also examined. As the age difference between most siblings was relatively modest, a part of the family variance might be due to cohort effects. However, when age was added to the multilevel model, the unexplained family variance did not change. Thus, it appears that the age composition of the dyads did not lead to an upward bias of the family factor. Finally, we examined whether the high proportion of item nonresponse on occupational status biased the estimates. When a control variable indicating whether the socioeconomic status was missing due to nonemployment was added to the models, this additional variable was statistically nonsignificant in all the models. In addition, none of the other estimates of interest changed substantially.

Discussion

Although it is widely acknowledged that the family plays an important role in attitude formation, surprisingly little is known about the impact of the family on adult children's ethnic attitudes or about the underlying mechanisms that account for this influence. Therefore, this study examined family influences on attitudes of native Dutch toward having ethnic minority members as kin through marriage.

This study demonstrated the importance of the family in shaping ethnic attitudes. Almost 30% of the variance in the intermarriage attitude could be attributed to the family of origin. This is quite similar to the results of recent sibling studies on kinship norms (De Vries et al., 2009) and on Jewish intermarriage patterns in the Netherlands (Kalmijn et al., 2006). Although people's attitudes are to a large extent based on personal choices and circumstances, their family background also is important for the formation of ethnic attitudes, despite notions of individualization and modernization (Popenoe, 1988).

A second aim was to assess potential mechanisms by which families influence intermarriage attitudes. In the final models, we were quite successful in explaining the family influence, as we were able to account for almost 60% of the between-family variance in the ethnic intermarriage attitudes.The congruence of intermarriage attitudes between parents and children was an important mechanism. This is in line with the as-yet-untested claim of Kalmijn and colleagues (2006) that family background strongly influences homogamy preferences. Whereas most of the literature on intergenerational attitude congruence focuses on young children or adolescents, this study examined adult children's attitudes. Therefore, our study was able to shed light on the understudied issue of whether family effects remain important in adulthood (Knafo & Galansky, 2008). The results suggest that family influences are not limited to ethnic attitudes of children, but also extend to ethnic attitudes of adults.

The data also showed that sibling similarity in intermarriage attitudes is linked to their joint socioeconomic and religious background. However, these effects weakened after the siblings' own socioeconomic and religious statuses were included in the analysis. This suggests that the role of the family in intermarriage attitudes partly results from the process of the intergenerational transmission of social and cultural positions. The reason why children of highly educated parents are more likely to hold favorable attitudes than children of parents with a low level of education is that the former are more highly educated themselves; educational attainment is positively associated with favorable intermarriage attitudes.

Current family characteristics also explained part of the family influence on intermarriage attitudes. We found support for the hypothesis that the strength of family relationships, expressed via the adherence to family norms and family contact, is positively related to resistance to intermarriage. This is in accordance with the idea that when family ties are tight and people are strongly oriented toward the family, family members have an incentive to keep ''strangers'' out of the family. On the other hand, family characteristics that indicate warm family relationships appeared to be related to stronger acceptance of ethnic intermarriage. The underlying mechanism might be that warm and trusting family relationships can lead to the development of generalized trust (Glanville & Paxton, 2007) and a sense of open-mindedness.

Finally, strong family ties also moderated the effect of parental attitude on children's attitudes. More specifically, the more frequently family members interact, the stronger the association between parents' and children's attitudes. This result suggests that the family context not only conditions the relation between parents' and children's attitudes during childhood and adolescence (Jaspers, Lubbers, & De Vries, 2008; Roest, Dubas, & Gerris, 2009; Whitbeck & Gecas, 1988), but also during adulthood. We did not find a moderating influence of family warmth, which suggests that the congruence of attitudes does not depend on the affective climate in which this transmission takes place. No evidence was found for the proposition that within families with less warm relationships adult children might distance themselves from their parents and turn away from parental attitudes.

This study has shed light on the magnitude and underlying mechanisms of the family influence on ethnic attitudes. Nevertheless some limitations should be noted. Although we were able to explain more than half of the family variance, the study raises questions about how to explain the remaining unexplained family influence. One possible approach would be to include better measures of family characteristics. Some measurement error might

have been present, as the participants were asked retrospectively about family characteristics at age 15. Furthermore, parental religiosity was measured quite crudely. As a result, effects of parental characteristics might be underestimated. Future studies could also explore other pathways through which the family influences ethnic attitudes. We suggested that one possible pathway through which parents affect their children is by shaping their social and cultural circumstances during youth. Children not only adopt attitudes from their parents, but also learn and are influenced by their parents' behavior. Therefore, the interethnic behavior of the parents during childhood and adolescence—for instance, their contact with interethnic friends—may possibly affect the ethnic attitudes of their children. Moreover, parents clearly influence the choice of neighborhoods and schools in which their children spend most of their youth. This creates shared interethnic experiences between siblings, as there are large differences in ethnic compositions across neighborhoods and schools (McPherson et al., 2001), which in turn might affect ethnic attitudes. Two other possible sources for attitudinal similarity within families are genetic factors and the cultural climate. Studies have indicated that the role of genetic factors in the transmission of social attitudes and orientations is significant (Eaves et al., 1999). Some studies have also found that the culturally prevailing value climate at a given time (i.e., zeitgeist) relates to attitudinal similarity within families, although this influence was not strong (Boehnke, Hadjar, & Baier, 2007).

Another limitation of this study is that current attitudes of the parent were assessed, rather than their attitudes during their children's formative period, which is the period in which the family is believed to exert its strongest influence on the attitudes of its members (Vollebergh et al., 2001). Longitudinal studies, however, showed that ethnic attitudes are quite stable during adulthood, and that the stability is stronger for parents than for their children. In addition, although studies showed that the influence of parents on children is stronger than the other way around (Vollebergh et al.), we have to take into account that part of the observed attitude congruence between family members might be due to the fact that they have mutually affected each other. To disentangle this possible reciprocal influence, and to provide stronger evidence for the lasting influence of parental socialization influences, longitudinal data are needed. Further, norms and values that are salient and that serve the in-group are transmitted relatively strongly (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001; Pinquart & Silbereisen, 2004). The degree to which ethnic outsiders are accepted as close kin by marriage might be a particularly important and salient point of discussion, as intermarriage of one's child directly affects the lives of all family members, the parents not the least (Spickard & Fong, 1995). But in addition, future studies should examine whether family effects are equally important for other sets of ethnic attitudes.

Finally, it is interesting to study whether family influences on ethnic attitudes are conditioned by other family-level characteristics. Conley, Pfeiffer, and Velez (2007) demonstrated that the family factor is smaller in single-parent families than in two-parent families because the former are more subject to extrafamilial influences and do not profit from the stability and social control that a second parent may offer.

To conclude, we contributed to the understanding of ethnic attitudes by the assessment of the impact of the family of origin and the examination of different pathways through which the family influences individual ethnic attitudes: The family is an important factor in shaping ethnic attitudes. We showed that the family not only has a substantial influence on individual attitudes through the transmission of parental attitudes and positions, but also via family characteristics in later life.

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